



Eddie A. Perez
Mayor

MAYOR MEETS WITH NHL COMMISSIONER TO DISCUSS FUTURE OF HOCKEY IN HARTFORD

(January 14, 2009)--- Hartford Mayor Eddie A. Perez met this morning with National Hockey League Commissioner Gary Bettman at NHL Headquarters in Manhattan to update the Commissioner on the status of Hartford's plans for a new arena in the city. Mayor Perez along with Andy Bessette, Chief Administrative Officer of the Travelers Insurance Company--- who is leading a task force on private sector support for a new arena--- and Oz Griebel, CEO of the MetroHartford Alliance, discussed with Commissioner Bettman the potential for including an NHL franchise in future plans for the development of a new Hartford arena.

"Today's meeting with Commissioner Bettman was an excellent opportunity to let him know that Hartford remains interested in bringing the NHL back to Connecticut's Capital City. We had a very good discussion and the Commissioner was generous with his time and thoughts about what was necessary for an NHL franchise to succeed. This was the first discussion in what all parties agreed should be an ongoing dialogue about Hartford's interest in bringing back an NHL team," Mayor Perez stated.

"With the state returning the XL Center, formerly the Hartford Civic Center, to the city by 2013, there is clearly a day of reckoning about what we as a city and state want to do with a facility that by all accounts is rapidly reaching the end of its useful life. To keep the momentum going in Hartford's renaissance, we must be prepared in the next three to five years to implement a redevelopment plan for a new multi-use arena facility that serves the entire state not only as a world class venue for concerts, family shows and UCONN Basketball, but also as a potential home for a major league sports franchise. In light of these difficult financial times, this effort will take a considerable amount of work and partnership between the city, state and corporate community to bring the plans for the development of a new facility to reality, but the benefits have the potential to be exponential," Perez stated.

The city retained HOK Sport to develop a feasibility plan for the development of a new arena facility. The preliminary report identified the present site of the XL Center (Hartford Civic Center) as the most viable location for a new facility.